

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01
TRSE-00 DHA-02 /080 W
-----090731Z 091487 /17

O 081110Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6074
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE
US MISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1363
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY
AMCONSUL DURBAN PRIORITY
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG PRIORITY
US MISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 2559

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0733

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: US, UN, PFOR, WA, SF
SUBJ: FOLLOW UP ON NAMIBIA TALKS; NAMIBIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS

1. AFRIKAANS SUNDAY NEWSPAPER RANORT, MAY 8 LEAD IN ARTICLE
DATELINED WINDHOEK, DESCRIBED VISIT TO WINDHOEK BY FIVE
WESTERN SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS, AND PLANS FOR TRANSFER
AND ULTIMATE RELEASE OF NAMIBIANS ON ROBBEN ISLAND. EMBASSY
TRANSLATION OF ARTICLE FOLLOWS:

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"THE POLITICAL FOCUS DRAMATICALLY SHIFTED TO WINDHOEK THIS
WEEKEND. THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF SURPRISE THAT
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE "BIG FIVE" WESTERN POWERS ARE COMING
HERE.

2. IN WASHINGTON, A SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN TOLD
HENNIE PRETORIUS LAST NIGHT THAT THEY ARE COMING NOT ONLY

TO SPEAK TO TURNHALLE, BUT ALSO TO SWAPO AND OTHER LEADERS.

3. "WE DON'T STAND FOR THE OUTRIGHT TURNOVER OF NAMIBIA TO SWAPO. ON THE OTHER HAND, TURNHALLE IS NOT THE ONLY IMPORTANT GROUP EITHER. THEREFORE THE U.S. AND THE OTHER FOUR COUNTRIES ARE THIS WEEK BEGINNING TO TALK WITH EVERYONE," SAID THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN.

4. HE FORESEES THAT AFTER THE DISCUSSIONS IN SWA THERE COULD BE ANOTHER MEETING BETWEEN SA AND THE BIG FIVE.

5. A FURTHER DEVELOPMENT IS THAT EVERYTHING IS BEING PREPARED TO MOVE SOUTH WEST AFRICA'S POLITICAL PRISONERS FROM ROBBER ISLAND. THIS WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE PROPOSED INTERIM GOVERNMENT TO SET THEM FREE - AN IMPORTANT TRUMP CARD ESPECIALLY NOW THAT SWAPO THREATENS TO BRING ITS POLITICAL PRISONERS TO JUSTICE.

6. THE 26 SWA/NAMIBIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS WHO ARE STILL HELD ON ROBBER ISLAND WILL SOON BE MOVED FROM THAT PRISON. A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PRISONS YESTERDAY TOLD RAPPORT THIS.

7. BUILDING WORKERS HAVE BEEN BUSY MAKING CHANGES TO WINDHOEK'S CENTRAL PRISON.

8. IN WINDHOEK, THIS IS SEEN AS THE FIRST STEP TOWARD THE RELEASE OF THE MEN, WHO INCLUDE FORMER SWAPO LEADER HERMAN JA TOIVO. FOR THE PROPOSED INTERIM GOVERNMENT IN SWA THIS UNCLASSIFIED

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COULD BE A HIGH TRUMP CARD, AND AT THE SAME TIME BE AN EMBARRASSMENT FOR SWAPO.

9. THE QUESTION WILL BE LEFT TO THE FUTURE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. IT WOULD BE EASY FOR THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT TO RELEASE POLITICAL PRISONERS IF THEY WERE ACTUALLY IN SWA PRISONS.

10. THIS GIVES THE INTERIM GOVT. A TRUMP CARD AGAINST SWAPO WHICH ITSELF HAS 53 POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ZAMBIA WHOM IT THREATENS TO BRING TO TRIAL.

11. A COURT IS BEING SET UP IN LUSAKA AT THE MOMENT, WHERE THOSE DETAINEES WILL DURING THE NEXT FEW WEEKS BE TRIED BY SAM NUJOME, LEADER OF THE MILITANT WING OF SWAPO.

12. AMONG THE 53 ARE LEADERS ANDREAS SHEPANGA AND SOLMON MIFIMA.

13. THIS GROUP HAS BEEN IN A PRISON IN ISANGA FOR MORE THAN

A YEAR. THE HOPE THAT THEY WILL COME OUT ALIVE IS SMALL.
NUJOMA HAS ALREADY SAID THAT THESE MEN WILL BE BROUGHT TO
JUSTICE IF THEY ARE FOUND GUILTY.

14. IT IS REPORTED FROM LUSAKA THAT THESE MEN WON'T HAVE
RIGHTS TO LEGAL REPRESENTATION. IT IS ALSO DOUBTFUL WHETHER
THEY'LL BE ALLOWED TO PUT THEIR OWN CASE BEFORE THE COURT.

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-----090731Z 086943 /17

O 081110Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6075

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

US MISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1364

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIOTY

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY

AMCONSUL DURBAN PRIORITY

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG PRIORITY

US MISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 2560

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15. IT IS NOT KNOWN WHAT THE EXACT CHARGES AGAINST THESE
MEN IS. IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT THEY STOOD UP AGAINST THE SWAPO
LEADERSHIP ABOUT A YEAR AGO. RECENTLY THERE HAS ALSO BEEN
TALK OF THE SAD CONDITIONS IN SWAPO TRAINING CAMPS AND CORRUPTION
AMONG THE ORGANIZATION'S LEADERSHIP. THERE IS PRESSURE FOR A
LEADERSHIP CONGRESS, WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN HELD 2 YEARS
AGO.

16. IF THE INTERIM GOVT. WAS READY TO RELEASE ITS POLITICAL
PRISONERS THEN THE OUTSIDE WORLD COULD RIGHTLY ASK WHY SWAPO

DOESN'T DO THE SAME. THIS WOULD GREATLY EMBARRASS SWAPO.

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17. THE 26 ROBBEN ISLAND PRISONERS ARE FROM THE 33 SENT TO JAIL UNDER THE TERRORISM ACT IN 1967. THE CHARGES RESULTED FROM POLICE ACTION AGAINST A SWAPO CAMP IN OVAMBO.

18. HERMAN JA TOIVO WAS NOT CAPTURED RIGHT AWAY, BUT LATER TAKEN INTO CUSTODY. HE IS STILL SEEN BY HIS PEOPLE AS A MAN WHO WOULD PREFER A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO SWA'S PROBLEMS.

19. WHAT JA TOIVO'S ATTITUDE IS AFTER 10 YEARS ON ROBBEN ISLAND IS THE QUESTION. IF HE WERE TO THROW HIS WEIGHT BEHIND THE TURNHALLE AND THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT - LIKE OTHER POLITICAL EXILES WHO HAVE RETURNED TO SWA IT WOULD MEAN MUCH IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SWAPO, ACCORDING TO OBSERVERS.

20. THE SAME GOES FOR MEN LIKE SHIPANGA AND MIFIMA. IN BLACK POLITICAL CIRCLES IT IS SAID THAT THESE AND MANY OTMDR SWAPO LEADERS WOULD RETURN AT THE SLIGHTEST OPPORTUNITY.

21. SUPPORT OF THIS ORDER WOULD BE OF INESTIMABLE VALUE TO AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT - ESPECIALLY SINCE IT APPEARS THAT FREE ELECTIONS WITH SWAPO PARTICIPATION MAY WELL BE HELD BEFORE INDEPENDENCE.

22. SUPPORT FOR SUCH ELECTIONS CAME FROM ALL QUARTERS THIS WEEK.

23. THE TWO WHITE DELEGATES TO THE TURNHALLE SPOKE IN FAVOR OF THIS AT REFERENDUM MEETINGS. THE FEELING IS THAT SUCH A GENERAL ELECTION IS THE ONLY WAY TO INVOLVE SWAPO AND GET INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR AN INDEPENDENT SWA/NAMIBIA.

24. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHEN OR HOW THE PROPOSED ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE. BUT INDICATIONS ARE THAT IT WILL BE HELD ON A NATIONAL, BUT ALSO ETHNIC BASIS. IN OTHER WORDS, WILL BE HELD AT THE SAME TIME COUNTRY-WIDE, BUT ON THE BASIS OF VOTERS' LISTS AS THEY NOW EXIST IN THE VARIOUS AREAS.

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25. RUMORS THAT THERE WILL BE A PRESIDENT FOR THE TERRITORY DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD, AND THAT THE POSITION WILL BE OCCUPIED BY A SORT OF SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNOR, COULD NOT

BE CONFIRMED THIS WEEK. THE NAME OF JAMMIE DE WET, PRESENT
COMMISSIONER GENERAL OF THE INDIGINOUS PEOPLES OF SWA IS
MENTIONED IN THIS CONNECTION." NELSON

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Disposition Comment:
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